

SN. 09/737,279

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REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are now pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, and 11 have been amended, and new claims 12-14 have been added. Claim 1 has been amended to define that the bearing retainer is fixed to the outwardly facing side of the end wall. Claim 2 has been placed in independent form, including the subject matter of previously submitted claim 1, and further defining that a second flange supports the urging member. Claim 10 has been amended to define that the urging member is a spring. Allowable claim 11 has been placed in independent form to place this claim in condition for allowance. No new matter has been introduced.

Allowable Claims

The examiner indicated that claim 11 will be allowed if it is placed in independent form. Claim 11 is now in condition for allowance since it is placed in independent form. Based on the examiner's comments regarding allowance of claim 11, claim 2 has been amended to include a second flange that supports the urging member. The examiner stated that Svab does not teach this feature. Accordingly, applicants submit that claim 2 is also in condition for allowance.

Art Rejection

Claim 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Svab (USP 4,543,852). Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 2, and 10 clearly define over this reference within the meaning of §§ 102, 103 because Svab would not have taught the bearing retainer configuration set forth in claim 1, the second flange supporting the urging member set forth in claim 2, and the urging member set forth in claim 10.

Specifically, claim 1 now recites a bearing retainer that is fixed to the outwardly facing side of the end wall and that projects radially inwardly toward the bearing mounting hole. The

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bearing retainer engages the bearing to pinch the bearing against the flange. In contrast, Svab's bearing retainer is not fixed to the outwardly facing side of the end wall, but rather inwardly of the end wall. Accordingly, applicants submit that claim 1 distinguishes over Svab within the meaning of § 102.

Independent claim 2 now calls for a second flange that supports an urging member. As correctly acknowledged by the examiner, Svab does not disclose or teach an urging member that is supported by a flange member. Accordingly, claim 2 also distinguishes over Svab.

Independent claim 10 calls for an elastically deformable urging member, comprising a spring, in contact with an inwardly facing side surface of the bearing. In this regard, the examiner states that Svab's spring of element 8 corresponds to the claimed urging member. Applicants disagree. In Svab, the member that contacts the bearing from its inward side is not a spring, but a support, which in turn is urged by the spring. In claim 10, the spring (i.e., urging member) itself contacts the inwardly facing side surface of the bearing. The cover, which engages the bearing on an outwardly facing side thereof, and the spring itself pinch the bearing axially inwardly against the urging member. Accordingly, Svab would not have anticipated claim 10 within the meaning of § 102.

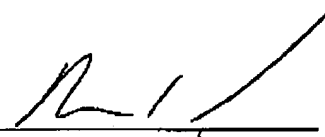
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Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 1-14 patentably distinguish over the applied reference and are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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